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SHORT POEMS:
OF SACRED TRAVEL, MISCELLANEOUS,
AND
"IN MEMORIAM."

BY
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VICAR (DESIGNATE) OF S. NICOLAS', BIRMINGHAM.



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INTRODUCTION.



THE verses contained in the first part of this book were written during a journey and visit to Sinai and Palestine. The route pursued lay by Gibraltar, and followed the northern coast of the Mediterranean as far as Naples; a few pauses being made by the way. Then, having crossed to Alexandria and Cairo, it proceeded by Suez and Wâdy Taiyibeh to Jebel Mûsa, and thence over the Tîh to Gaza; afterwards winding about in the Holy Land until it had reached Beyrout. One or two of the Desert Sonnets, however, are here presented in an order slightly different from that of their birth; for the sake of a better grouping of those which bear on the ancient "Mounts of God."

The verses contained in the second part are of an earlier date; some at the beginning of the series being almost a quarter of a century older. A few have been in print before.

The verses "In Memoriam" have been in private

circulation already, and have in that way somewhat overpassed the bounds within which it had been intended to confine them. Of the sixth and longest of them only the closing paragraphs are here reproduced.

The whole collection (such as it is) is now put into print, with a hope of its somewhat assisting the Funds of the "Free and Open" Church of S. Nicolas, Birmingham; which in making its first start among a very poor people, and in spite of the great generosity of a few of its friends, is not yet in a way to think any scorn of even the smallest help that can be given. If any good Christian, who reads this, has money (little or much) to spare, and is moved and minded to make a good use of it, the writer would be very thankful to serve as his almoner. The district contains a population of 6,000, and is greatly in need of Schools.

W. G.

*Colmore Terrace, Summer Lane,
Birmingham.*

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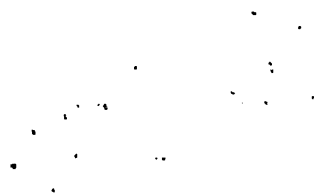
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III.—JN MEMORIAM M. P.

I.

POEMS OF SACRED TRAVEL.



Dedication.



My sister dear, I ne'er was skilled
 The master-song to pour ;
 And when thy Surrey grave was filled
 I thought to sing no more.

But while the nightingales are mute,
 And minstrel monarchs rest,
 The linnet's chirp, the shepherd's lute,
 May prove its feebler best :

And hearts, whose blither hues are gone,
 May yet some posy show ;
 As gleams, where erst the splendour shone,
 Arabia's after-glow.

I bring my songs to thee ; for thou,
 A song in music shrined,
 Where'er I rove, abidest now
 Before my musing mind.

I saw thee when the sun went down,
Beyond the sorrowing sea ;
I heard the moan for beauty flown,
The solemn sigh for thee.

I saw thee when the moon arose
Above the Arabian hill ;
I knew thee then, as memory knows,
A mirthful maiden still.

By Paran's little rivulet,
It was with thee I talked :
At Sinai, on Olivet,
It was with thee I walked.

I knew that awed and pensive hush,
So often heard before,
Which hung about the desert bush,
And on Gennesaret's shore ;

Nor have I coined a comely thought,
Or shaped a tuneful line,
But all the dream with thee was fraught,
And all the music thine.

Thy cares are done, O gentlest one,
While care remains to me ;
Yet I my verse will still rehearse,
As when a boy, to thee.

THE ROCK OF GIBRALTAR.

—o—

AUSTERE and grim it towers before the sun,
 Fair Europe's frontage toward the paynim's seat.
 The two great waters mingle at its feet.
 Before it flit the ghosts of ages done,—
 Huge eastern ghosts ; of ages unbegun,
 The impatient shadows, thronging from the west.
 Within its pierced and lacerated breast
 Abides the death of whom it scowls upon.
 Behind it, veiled from casual peering, smile
 Bright hills, and flowery dells, and christened loves,
 And (veiled yet more) sweet Freedom's favourite isle,
 With stalwart Faith's deep-rooted oaken groves.
 Above, whose ensign ? Ah, my country dear !
 Thy God uphold thee still that foremost flag to rear.

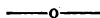
A DAY AT MILAN.



ENGLAND, in months of mist, not oft may reap
 A more unpleasing day. One hueless cloud,
 Close-fitting, dank, within the blue was bowed,
 And tearful moved each suffering fane to weep.
 Yet high amid the damps, and vast, and deep,
 With low-hewn crypt, great aisle, and towering
 rood,
 The mountainous House of Christ in beauty stood,
 Its place not forfeit, nor its voice asleep.
 And men may scowl at will, who goodness scorn
 Which is not as their own; yet fondly I
 Will hope for thee, to Christ so early born,
 Most fervid flowery-minded Italy,
 That all thy cloud shall pass, nor ill remain,
 When our dear Living Sun but looks on thee again.

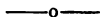
VESUVIUS.

“ If He do but touch the hills they shall smoke.”



SAVE me, O God ! for I have seen the might,
 That waits upon Thy Finger. I have seen
 The meek earth (bared of all her genial green,
 In prophet sackcloth towering all her height,
 Low thunder muttering) drilling in Thy Sight,
 As if in practice for the days of ire,
 Her cataracts of red consuming fire,
 Her seas that burn, her brooks that bane and blight.
 Men talk of angry waves, and 'mid the roar
 Of ravening oceans women tame their mirth ;
 But ocean-frowns are terrible no more,
 Beside this fury of the gentler earth.
 So chastened shows the blustering lion's path,
 And frights not, seen beside the mute Lamb's
 direr wrath.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE GREAT WATERS.



I SAID, when first I looked upon the face
Of the dark-eyed Atlantic, and the roll
Of its majestic swell came o'er my soul,
Its forces quickening, that at length a place
Had made me envious, and that, had I grace
To choose some other lot, I fain would be
The Angel of the waters of the sea,
And have the charge of all this billowy space.
Yet now those daring thoughts I put away,
And even to this prefer my proven state ;
For power is burdensome, and to obey
Is easier than to practise with the great.
High boon for me, that I, without annoy,
Where others toil, may gaze, and worship, and
enjoy.

ON ENTERING THE DESERT.



Now have I left in turn dear English friends,
Pure rites of Europe, Afric's gay bazaar,
And the earth's brooks and gardens ; and afar
Before mine eyes one arid waste extends :—
One arid waste, where not a fig-tree lends
Or noon-day shade or shelter from the night,
And not a chime, high-lodged in belfry-height,
Goes forth to cheer, and not a shower descends.
Dear Christian Boy, to whom my verse shall come,
At English altars nurtured now and blest,
And joyous made with sweets of youth and home,
Life's kindred desert portals all thy rest.
Thrice happy thou, when earlier joys are o'er,
If but thy skies be God's, and His the hills before.

JEBEL ATÀKA;

THE MOUNTAIN OF DELIVERANCE :

*Overlooking all those points of the Red Sea, at some one
or other of which the Israelites must have crossed.*

—o—

O VENERABLE Height, whose furrowed brow
The flood of Pharaoh mirrors : thou hast seen,
Save one great cycle which hath later been,
The holiest marvels ever wrought below.
For thou wast by when the dread pillar's glow
Came down unquivering to the yawning sea ;
And all the mystery of its course to thee
Was bared, and all the tyrant's overthrow.
O sage and silent ! mute from age to age,
Amid the questionings of foe and friend !
Behold, I read, as in the sacred page,
A word within thee, treasured to the end,—
“ See thou tell no man this : ” and whoso heeds
May deem that He was here, from whom that law
proceeds.

ON A SOLITARY GRAVE,
IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CAMEL-TRACKS.



PEACE to thee, nameless One! His peace He pour,
Whom, known of Him, 'twas never thine to know!
And God for good remember him, who so
Cared for thy relics when their strife was o'er!
The burning blast shall hunt thee now no more:
The wearying Wâdy lulls thee in its breast:
The moon by night shall gild thy lonely rest,
Nor chill thee with its beams as heretofore.
Like howling tempests heard from fire-lit homes,
The drudging camel's slow laborious tread
Shall bring but soothing, when its tumult comes
Toiling at noon beside thy shaded bed.
And He—the ALONE—Who sees where Moses fell,
Shall be thy neighbour here, thy friends, thy citadel.

THE SCENERY OF THE DESERT COAST,
ON A CLOUDY DAY.

Gen. i. 3—10.

LIGHT, and a sky, without its twittering flock ;
Mountain, and plain, and flood ; dry land and sea,
With rigour parted ; every fruitful tree
Far, far from sight ; down from the sterile rock
No brooklet moving ; and the cloudy block
Of lifted vapour shutting out the sun :—
It is as if God's great Third Day, begun,
Had here been stayed by some mysterious shock,
And held immovable. And, Ali dear,
My Arab comrade, I behold in thee
The same stayed work :—a beam, whereby to steer
Thy wavering choice ; an open place, where He
His word may utter ; and a ridded space
For golden flower and fruit, when breathes again His
grace.

HILLS AND FLOODS.

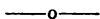


With equal force the seas and mountains awe,
Yet separate feelings on our hearts impress.
While earnest waves, at war with listlessness,
My frosted soul to quicker life would thaw,
The solemn stirless hills I never saw
But I was moved to sit me down and weep.
Say, O my Masters, when I slept the sleep
Wherein I learnt these mortal breaths to draw,
Did some hill-memory triumph in my mind
Against the effacing bath? O let me glean,
When mountains o'er me thus their charm unwind,
That I some while the Vast and Calm have seen
Of God's great Mountain-Throne, creation's stay,
Before which seas arise, and serve, and pass away.*

* Rev. xxi. 1.

SELIM, THE CAMEL-DRIVER ;

OF THE TRIBE OF HAIWAT.



THE thirty days of Ramazan
Were slowly trailing by,
And Selim's fast unbroken ran
While light was in the sky ;

For ne'er, from dawn to vesper gloom,
Or scantest crumb he knew,
Or breath of dear narcotic fume,
Or touch of quenching dew.

I saw him once on Cairo's plain,
As boomed the evening gun,
Fall prone and drink the foulest drain,
His day's abstaining done ;

But while the hours were yet unspent,
How burnt soe'er the waste,
Beside our pleasant meal he bent,
Unwon to sip or taste.

We toiled in desert paths, and he
The whole hot journey trod :—
From Nilus' flood, by Suez' sea,
Toward the rocks of God :—

And sang, " When on my horse I ride,
In great Mohammed's day,
Then shall my sabre, flashing wide,
Its thousand foemen slay." *

Though all his faith was wrapt about
With falsehood unsurpast,
And all his life was fading out
Before its gloomy Fast,

We had not in our varied band,
'Mid souls of more resource,
A blither eye, a prompter hand,
A heart of longer force.

* Literally :—" When I ride on my horse,
" In the times of the Prophet,
" I shall kill a thousand people."

But once at noon he quailed, and owned
To sickness and distress :
At night beside his fire he moaned,
In pain and sleeplessness :

At morn upon his camel's back,
Low-crouched, with shaded eye,
Still moving o'er the desert track,
Mukatteb* saw him die.

We bore him on, amid the rocks,
To Paran's ancient hill,
Where mild Tawârahs fold their flocks
Beside the silver rill ;

And there his brother scooped a grave,
Where, in a far-gone year,
His father bought a field, to have
For a possession there.

Ye tents of Haiwat, mourn and tell—
Your palm is battered down,
Your pitcher broken at the well,
Your well of water flown.

Ye tents of Haiwat, mourn and weep :
Ye wives of Selim wail :
For Selim sleeps the lasting sleep
In Paran's far-off vale.

* The Written Valley.

And Thou, most Merciful and Just,
Thy creature's dearest Hold,
Be not extreme to judge the dust,
Nor cast it from Thy fold.

The deeds he wrought in Moslem faith,
Yet wrought in awe of Thee,
Good Father, cleanse from error's scathe,
And weigh with charity.

THE OLD MONASTIC ORDERS.



HONOURED of God, the Church—the world—the
earth—

Owes them a lasting debt. In vanished times
'Twas theirs to witness against selfish crimes,
And theirs to nurse, in days of mist and dearth,
All skill and learning, and the goings-forth
Of peaceful industry. But now their skies
Have drifted hence, and men will soon despise
The lingering legion that survives its worth.
Good Mother, stay them not, but, firmly-voiced,
Bless them courageously, and let them go.
New mornings dawn, new-shadowed, new-rejoiced :
Shine other suns, and other tempests blow.
Instead of fathers shall thy children be,
Whom thou in all the world shalt vest with
chieftaincy.

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE BURNING BUSH.

Exod. iii.

—o—

HOME of the Voice which all may hear who will,—
Heard but when hearkened for : in midst of thee
High thoughts and projects, born spontaneously,
Pure listening minds with their fair colours fill.
And when lone Moses seeks thy haunted hill,
In goodness nurtured, exercised in lore,
With brethren's miseries afflicted sore,
While vast ancestral hopes possess him still ;—
When all thy rocks have gazed into his heart,
And with them all the Arabian stars by night ;—
O not in vain shall visions lure apart,
Or mystic voices on his soul alight ;
Great wordless aspects, like great music heard,
Awakening all within to greet the appearing Word.

RÂS SÛFSÂFEH :

BELIEVED TO BE THE ROCK FROM WHICH THE LAW
WAS GIVEN.



Most sacred Cliff! Triune,* as for the Trine,
Whose flaming Touch hath hallowed thee for aye!
I had not thought to greet thee with a lay,—
Fearing the theme, too high for chords of mine.
Yet now I pray thee, when before thy shrine
Awed pilgrims pause with slow-uplifted eye,
That thou thyself for Him who fills the sky
Wilt speak to them; for moving tones are thine.
Tell them of Greatness, Lastingness, and Calm :—
Greatness which harms them not, but offers shade;
And Lastingness, which rears with deathless palm
God's uttered Law, on strong foundations laid;
And Calm which is for him, who, following thee,
Gives up himself to serve the Faithful Trinity.

* Its front presents the appearance of three united towers, with a buttress on the north-east.—“The three peaks of red granite which overhang the northern side of the Valley of Chamouni, called from their colour the *Aiguilles Rouges*, give some notion of the colour and form of Sinai.”—Stanley: “Sinai and Palestine” : page 12, note : New Edition.

MOUNT SERBAL :

THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN A PRE-JUDAIC SANCTUARY.



DREAD Mount, whose five upreaching groups of
peaks *

Cried long for Him who down from Heaven should
fare,

And five deep wounds for man's salvation dare :
How great wert thou when the faint morning streaks
Of dawning faith illumed thee, and the weeks
Brought sacrifice and worship to thy feet

From all this desert; owning thee His seat,
Who breathes the tempest and in thunder speaks !
Yet armfuls oft return where handfuls flee ;

And Israel's harpers, harping on the height
Where shone the Glory gleaned away from thee,
Have made thee lustrous with diviner light ;
More of His greatness manifesting forth,
Who loves both thee and them,—the God of all the
earth.

* "It is a vast mass of peaks, which in most points of view may be reduced to five, the number adopted by the Bedouins."—Stanley's "Sinai and Palestine": page 72, New Edition.

MOUNT SEIR:

ALSO THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN A PRE-JUDAIC
SANCTUARY.

(Written on the Tih, between Nukhl and Gaza.)

I HAVE not seen thee, nor may ever see,
 Strong Hold of thriftless Esau :—hallowed Mount,
 Whose consecration doth with Serbal's count,
 And but to Sinai yields supremacy.
 Yet, thus far neared, I bow my thoughts to thee,
 With reverence and regard :—with reverence, due
 To Foot-marks of Elohim, and with true
 Regard for thy red huntsman's memory.
 For God forgive me if in this I err,
 But I do love that man, despite his ill :
 I love his openness, his vehement stir
 Of fervid feeling, and his generous will.
 The choicest garden-rose hath thorns, concealed ;
 And he, wild hedge-row thorn, hath rosy blooms
 revealed.

THE REMOVES
OF THE TOKENS OF GOD'S PRESENCE.

Hab. iii. 3 : Deut. xxxiii. 2 : Psalm lxxviii. 60, 67-69 :
S. Matt. xxiii. 38.

God came from Paran, and on Sinai shone,
And past from Sinai into Shiloh's tent;
And, parted thence, the unresting Glory went
To Salem's fane ; and thence again 'tis gone.
O friends, whose oft-uprooted hearts bemoan
The uncontinuing city : sure 'twere strange,
If, where God's Sign is doomed to restless change,
Unchanging rest for God's beloved were won.
In Him confiding, fare we where He will ;
Thoughts of His partings cheering all our lot.
God is not bound to one fair tent or hill :
Ye cannot be, Beloved, where God is not.
The compass of the world is His, and yours ;
And everywhere His might safe sojourning secures.

THE TAWÂRAHS.

“Them that are meek shall He guide in judgment; and such as are gentle, them shall He learn His way.”

—o—

YE sons of Jethro, hear me while I speak.—

When our good Lord shall hither send His call

And here command His quickening beam to fall,

Your tents shall be the first which it shall seek;

And ye shall be the first to rise, and break

From ancient error, in sincereness thought;

And yours shall be the holiest worship, brought,

From all these realms, to Him, your rightful Sheykh.

Two hills are yours, on which His cloud hath prest:—

Serbal and Sinai in your midst abide.

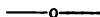
Two marks are yours, on which His blessings rest:—

Meekness and gentleness are His to guide.

And even now, ere sounds His chariot-wheel,

Behold, I greet you His, imprinted with His seal.

THE DESERT OWL.



I MIGHT have slain thee, Bird ; for in thy grove,
Till peril's foot was on thee, wrapt in thought,
Thou satest unaware, and scarce wast brought
To gather up thy forces and remove
When noise assailed thee : but as fits the glove
Each folding finger of the lady's hand,
Thou, silent thinker in a silent land,
Wert fitly formed these desert glooms to rove.
I saw thee turn and eye us as we left,
And read the judgments in thy ponderous breast :—
“ Poor creatures !—lorn of light !—of wisdom reft !
“ Why toil ye in these heats, and seek no rest ? ”
Ah, Bird ! thy tamarisk shade may serve for thee ;
But we, divinely souled, to hills of God must flee.

DESERT EXILES;
ANCIENT AND MODERN.

Numb. xiii. xiv.

WHEN coward sons refuse their destiny,
 Unripe to claim the mountains of their Lord,
 And earless give no credence to His word,
 Their days doth He consume in vanity,
 Their years in trouble. Cheerless earth and sky,
 Incessant seeking, hope that only feigns,
 The rest that wearies, and the bliss that banes,—
 These shall be yours, ye faithless, till ye die.
 O be ye sure that He who Lives is GOD,—
 Your life's Good Founder,—Shepherd of your days:
 O go your way, and let His courts be trod
 With joyous feet, and resonant with praise:
 His courts a garnished earth, where, Anak fled,
 Brooks—fountains—depths of love in every vale are
 shed.

INCIDENTS AT GAZA.

Judges xvi.

- “ WITH palms overshadowed, with olives begirt,
“ Full of riotous dogs, and of Arabs inert,
“ Thou hast furnished, O Gaza, rare food for the
sight :
“ But where is that Hebrew, the master of might ?
- “ From the ends of the ocean to seek him I came,
“ For from boyhood till now I have joyed in his
fame ;
“ And I never could think of thy vineyard or street,
“ But my heart in its musing that Hebrew would
meet.

“ O if hid in some chamber death-menaced he lies,
“ I will rest but till midnight, and then I will rise ;
“ And, hasting ere dawn on yon easterly track,
“ I shall find him, I know, and thy gates on his
back.”

So I lay until midnight. But ere I had turned
On that easterly track, by a rumour I learned
That the tribes of Philistia pressed to the gates,
With their lords and high captains and chiefest
estates.

Then I mixed with the crowd, and we trod through
the town,
And the sweet summer morning shone silently down ;
But the thousands of Gaza were loud in their song,
For Dagon had triumphed, and captured the strong.

To the temple of Dagon in pomp they repaired,
With banners uplifted, and trumpets that blared.
“ We praise thee, O Dagon (they shouted as one)—
“ We praise thee, O Dagon, for this thou hast
done.”

Then Dagon's adorers were fed from his store,
And the mirth of the heathen knew limit no more ;
And when it was loudest, and pride at its height,
O they brought in that Hebrew, the master of might.

He was laden with fetters : his eyes, they were gone :
A child was his master, and friend he had none :
And they cleared him a space in the midst of the
 court,
And they bade him be mighty, and made him their
 sport.

Full shrill were the gibes that were hailed from the
 crowd,
And pitiless women sat scoffing aloud :
The lords and high captains surveyed him aloof,
And three times a thousand beheld from the roof.

But he seems to be fainting with labour and pain,
Nor without a brief rest may be angered again ;
So he wins of the child, who his master is made,
That a while on the pillar his hand may be stayed.

Hark ! heard ye his cry ? He is feeble no more !
He is wrestling amain ! There is wrath at the door !
He has torn up their pillar ! Down crashes the
 wall,
And the thousands of Gaza lie slain in its fall.

O the feast and the jest in a moment had flown,
And the yell of the dead echoed over the town.
O I burst from my sleep, for I quaked at the sound,
And the hoarse dogs of Gaza sat howling around.

THE OLIVE.



THERE is not in the world a lovelier tree,
Or more exemplary. Its trunk obeys
A corded net-work, curbing all its ways,
Thrown from within in strong self-mastery.
Its every leaf, on both sides fair to see,
Is best and fairest seen from heaven above ;
For choicest green it ever skyward hove,
Yet wore but grey to earth, unboastfully.
And as for fruit,—O bright and clear it flows,
In solemn service, in Jehovah's courts,
And strength and cheer and benediction strows
In hall and hut, wherever man resorts.
Anointing kings, it heals the warrior's sore,
And decks with life and joy the tables of the poor.

THE THREE GREAT SIGHTS OF THE WORLD,
AND THEIR DIFFERING INSPIRATIONS.



WHEN first I saw the foaming sea,
A rare delight was mine ;
And storms of thought swept into me,
From off the billowy brine.

“ Arise, and bow thee to thy task,”
I heard the breakers say.
How well the years their fleeting mask !
It seems but yesterday !

Yet then I wrought with lighter pen,
The beardless youths among :
My cousin John was with me then,
Hence gathered now so long.

In riper years, when first a height,
Which peers within the blue,
Stood out before my climbing sight,
That tempest came anew.

But now mine eyes had seen the woe,
Wherein my fathers toiled ;—
The cloud which darkens all below,—
The stain which all hath soiled ;—

And chords of sorrowing note were stirred
Within my graver breast :—
“ O had I wings as yonder bird,
“ To flee and be at rest ! ”

Long years have passed—eventful years—
Diversely clothed and shod,
And now my travelled eye careers
Upon the streets of God ;

On streets which are not clouded round,
In skies where none may ken,
But paved with earthly blocks, and found
Beside the streets of men.

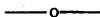
I search, and nothing checks my gaze
Of aspect high or strange :
If these became but human ways,
I could not mark the change.

I list, and whispers low and small
Are borne upon the breeze ;
In mountain olives musical,
And clear by sunny seas ;

Unsilenced in the noisy street,
And echoed o'er the rill ;
“ My Ways and thine at length shall meet :
“ Be comforted : be still.”

SUNRISE, AFTER A MOONLIGHT NIGHT ;

SEEN FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.



I saw the night upon the streets of God
Her tides in beauty shedding ; and I saw
The mightier morning wake upon the hills,
And bend his gaze upon the tides of night,
And change them inwardly from good to good,
As Christ the wedding-jars of Galilee,
Till every chamber overflowed with day.

As dwells the blessing of the mother lorn
Upon the cradle of her sireless child,
She watching by in widow-pensiveness,
So dwelt the musing moonlight on the roofs ;
And court and street, bazaar and hall and hut,
Lay sleeping, subject to a thousand dreams.

But when the morning rose with flashing eye
Upon the tops of Moab, and from thence
Shot instant gaze on Zion, then it seemed,
Amid the quenching of the fires above,
And all the twinkling of each glassy pane,
That, eastward set, had waited for the dawn,
As if the firmament had cast his stars
By mighty handfuls into Zion's lap,
With these betrothing her. So rare the gleam,
I soon could have believed that there had slept
In every of those chambers, densely veiled,
A radiant angel of the Holy One ;
Who now awaking cast his veils away,
And fearless at the lattice shewed himself.
And, Zion thus renewed, the sister hills,
Each after each, as each succession took
In dignity of stature, shared her bliss ;
Till all their domes were satisfied with light,
And all their girdling walls were glorified.

Then I bethought me what our Seer had writ.—
“ He set me in the spirit upon a height,
“ And made me look abroad ; and, he my guide,
“ I John beheld the New Jerusalem,
“ From heaven descending, coming down from God,
“ And with God's glory decked ; and she had light
“ As of a stone most precious ; paling not
“ Before the jasper ; as the crystal clear.” *

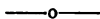
* Rev. xxi. 10, 11.

And me it pleased, returning from the mount
In fulness of my soul and thankfulness,
To deem that I had seen some kinsmanship
Of that majestic Vision of the Saint.
For that from heaven descends, which takes from
heaven

The very breath which makes it all it is ;
And much abides where christened hearts abide,
Which is not seen, nor shall be, till the earth
Is filled with Life that lightens, and the Church
Inundate glories in the Light that lives.

But, Lord, how long shall night-born dreams
prevail,
And dimness, and confusion ? More than those,
Who on the ramparts for the morning watch,
We seek Thy Foot-fall on the morning hills.
Set up Thyself, O God, and give us day ;
For where Thou art not day can never be.
Set up Thyself, O God, and let Thy Breath,
All ill dispersing as a rootless cloud,
Come forth upon our life-lorn streets and hearths ;
Transfiguring richly all which they possess,
Regathering fondly all which they have lost,
And shedding sweetness never known before.

THE WELL OF THE MAGI.



AN hour from Salem, as thou go'st
Where Bethlehem lures thee on,
A fountain springs, whose waters boast
A gracious service done.

'Tis said that, when the Magi turned
From Herod's baleful hall,
Their star awhile was undiscerned,
Their searching fruitless all ;

Till, pausing here amid the way,
Low down their gazing fell,
And there they found that guiding ray,
Deep-mirrored in the well.

I know not if the tale be true,
Or whence its lore may be ;
But howsoe'er the legend grew,
It preaches truth to me.

The firmament—the expanded Book—
Wherein my lights are placed,
On no malignant world doth look,
With answering-power effaced ;

But earthly springs in pureness move,
And earthly wells are clear,
And glorious things of heaven above
Are oft reflected here.

If then dull court or cloister dream
Should e'er becloud the sky,
And veil from me the guiding beam,
Which glads me from on high ;

While joylessness and vagueness there
Awhile triumphant go,
I will but bow me as I fare,
And scan the works below.

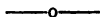
JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN EXPULSION
FROM MACHPELAH.



DEAR father Abraham, bright surviving sun,
 Whose shattered system flits amid the vast :
 Dear father Abraham, lamp of ages past,
 Than whom a nobler hath not been, save One :
 Behold how these thine Ishmael offspring shun
 Communion with thine Isaac ! Thee they guard
 With proud affection, but thy cave have barred
 From foot of ours, and bidden our love be-gone.
 And this (—alas ! good father—) whets the sting :—
 That I misdoubt thy sturdy Arab's share
 Of graceful justice in his boyhood's spring,
 When God was with thee and thy Sarah bare.*
 Him from thy tent, God suffering us, we drove ;
 And he but metes us back the sum of our unlove.

* Gen. xxi. 9—21.

MOHAMMEDANS IN THE HOLY PLACE.



HE hath done all things well. These are not they,
Whose own the Temple is; but these hath He
Selected from the world its guards to be,
Till faith shall come again. 'Tis theirs to fray
The Greek's void repetition; theirs to stay
The flippant curtsey of the adjacent west;
And theirs, my country, farthest hence and best,
Thy sweetly-pillowed pew to ward away.
Here shall their own majestic rites abide,
Unlaboured, few, as if from Mamre's shade;—
Their low prostrations, proudly, side by side,
By sire and son shall duteous here be made;—
Till richer time shall bring the heirs of all,
The race that shall be born, and whom the Lord
shall call.

ESDRAELON ;

THE FLOWERY BATTLE-FIELD OF PALESTINE.



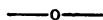
O DRENCHED with blood, and yet in smiles arrayed !
 Thy lip unshook, thy lap with corpses piled !
 Hast thou no care when he who is thy child
 Is torn with slaughter and in darkness laid ?
 They do thee wrong, O Earth, who deem thee made
 Of heart so dull, and so unkind of soul :
 Doth not He fill thee who surveys the whole,
 Ere yet the part is ripe for being played ?
 He fills thee, and in Him thou gainest strength
 To hear our wailings and behold us dead ;
 Secure of our advancement at the length,
 When sin and conflict and distress are fled.
 Yea, Mother dear, upon thy brow I read
 My Father's mirrored calm, from all misgivings
 freed.

THE MORAL OF THE RICH AND STONY SOIL
OF THE GOOD LAND.

“ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.”

O ISRAEL, hear ! For softly-shielded hands,
And silken laps, that know of toil no more,
The Lord our God hath nothing good in store,
But only for the bluff and hardy bands
Of sturdy labour. These His rugged lands
Enrich with plenteousness of corn and wine ;
But those with hunger and with thirst shall pine,
Though Joseph's portion at their bidding stands.
Whoso is wise will ponder this, and shun
The leprous hurt which comes of slothful ease :
Not better for thee is the substance won,
Than is the sweat which brings it to thy knees.
O dwell with me, sweet lore ! O arduous soil,
Of God held good, teach me that one best boon is toil.

THE HUMAN LINEAMENTS OF THE EARTH
AND OF PALESTINE.



God in man's image made a land for man :

After man's foreknown likeness made He it.

Strong rocks, like sovereign wills, He caused to sit
Above the deeps where passionate billows ran :

And hungering fires, deep-hid, were in His plan,

And sanguine rills which ever onward tend :

And if its lord his fostering care should lend,
Then not a breeze but some fair fruit should fan.

But chiefly man-like was man's land in this,

That all its fairness hung upon its sun :

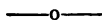
Its sun unhid, of winning loveliness :

Unwinning else : perchance a thing to shun.

So God made all the earth ; and most of all

On thee, dear land of Christ, He bade this impress
fall.

N A Z A R E T H.



THE northern mountains bear it up a space
Above the plain where sterner conflict dwells,
And fold it round with meekest mountain grace,
And breathe upon it sweetest mountain spells.
The bird-world music softly o'er it wells :
The flower-world incense from its pasture soars :
Its children's ache the industrious olive quells :
Beside its hearths the bending fig adores :
And one rich fount its wave through all the valley
pours.

Yet no dream-furnished phantom vale is here,
For sports of moon-bred nothings carpeted :
'Tis earthly all, that meets or eye or ear,
And all for human incidents is spread.
Its days and nights in common course are shed
From common suns, and common moons and stars :
Now withering summer smites its garden-bed ;
Now blustering winds o'erleap its mountain-bars ;
And now come wintry storms, with coarse memorial
scars.

High on its west for human feet is piled
A grassy gazing-place o'er plain and wood,
O'er surging sea, o'er uplands rude and wild,
O'er town and field and mountain-solitude :
And vocal to the spirit of man, and good,
Are all the teachings of that matchless show.
The far-spread earth, the never-tiring flood,
The untroubled sky, the mountain robed in snow,
Its mystic God-hewn way to human souls doth
know.

“Come forth, O Man, from self's sequestering
hedge”
(So pleading cries the chequered out-spread
earth):
“Look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge :
“See whether it be well with fold and hearth.”

“ Bestir thyself, O Man ”—(so travels forth
The voice of waves which rest not day or night):
“ Of earnest toil behold the golden worth:
“ Mark how it spurns corruption’s loathsome
 blight,
“ And gathers where it dwells bright health and
 pure delight.”

“ Lift up thyself, O Man, and hope the best,
“ Assured of good in some superior sphere ”:—
So flows the call by tranquil skies address,
High bent o’er clouds, and storms, and winters
 sere.
“ Prepare thyself, O Man, for days austere ”—
(Thus whispering warns the mountain robed in
 snow):
“ Prepare thyself for chills and hardships here:
“ Who nearest press to Heaven’s unfailing glow,
“ On them unfailing falls some bleaching shroud of
 woe.”

Nor lacks there, twining with this mingled cry,
The voice of ages which have ta’en their flight:—
“ O gird thee with thy sword upon thy thigh,
“ Nor let thy loneliness thy soul affright.
“ On yonder hill one Seer of truth and right
“ Four hundred false ones in their pride with-
 stood:

“ With stars of heaven allied in glorious fight,
“ Yon feeble stream became a conquering flood :
“ A peasant freed yon vale from Midian’s lawless
brood.” *

Full of the life of God,—the lore unthought,
The words unspeakable, the memories vast,
The purpose huge, the mighty musings brought
From upper kingdoms and the lands that last :—
Full of the life of Man,—the fears that cast
Their network shadowings o’er each golden dream,
The yearnings high, the shrinkings from the blast,
The impulsive hope, the fondly-laboured scheme,
The lessons learnt with toil, the Law’s reflected
gleam :—

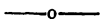
Full filled with each, these solemn scenes among
The youthful Christ went forth from day to day,
And read the flowers, and listened to the song
Of birds, and marked the little child at play ;
Then urged the chirping plane upon its way,
And form and order and subservence won
From knotted oaks, and blocks that useless lay ;
And hence, as from an east obscure and dun,
He dawned upon the world, its great unsetting Sun.

* 1 Kings xviii. : Judges v. 20, 21 : Judges vii. Carmel, Kishon, and the vale of Jezreel, are all included, with other historic spots, in that incomparable panorama.

O Child of His, on whom His Name is named,
Before whose feet some mightiest path dilates,
On whose great life some vale obscure, or blamed,
For consecration and for glory waits :
O Christian Boy, whom goodness captivates,
And beckons up the steep of pain and power :
O open wide thy spirit's friendly gates,
In gainful youth's predestinating hour ;
And earth and sky and sea shall crowd its halls with
dower.

Know thine own worth, and keep thyself with zeal :
See as thine own thy neighbour's fettering curse :
Hear God in all things : give thyself to feel
The long deep sermons of the universe :
And all thou feelest let thy life rehearse.
So men shall come from far, when thou art gone
From all the vale which was thine early nurse,
To scan the scenes which thou hast gazed upon,
And in God's Sight to muse o'er all that thou hast
done.

FOUR BONNY HANDFULS OF EARTH.



Four bonny handfuls of earth,
And all as a present for thee.
I have gathered thee four bonny handfuls of earth :
I am bringing them safe to the isle of thy birth :
I am bringing them over the sea.

I culled thee at Bethlehem one,
From Rachel's burial sod ;
At Nazareth one, by the village fount ;
At Gennesaret one ; and one on the Mount,
That was wet with the Tears of God.

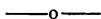
O oft in the old old time,
As we stood at the school-dame's knee,
The names I have named in lesson would pass ;
And we never supposed, as we read in the class,
I should gather such presents for thee.

But I mean thy children four
To strew them around thy bed ;
For a sign that the Life, which was lived on this
earth,
Shall compass thee round with a sheltering girth,
And bring thee again from the dead.

II.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE CHRISTENING.



THERE were footsteps in the solemn aisle,
And the people turned to see ;
And the choristers withheld awhile
Their evening melody.

A few of the undistinguished poor
Had quitted their oaken seat,
And were gathering near the western door,
With slow and reverent feet.

They stood by the Font, in whiteness hewn,
With its water brimming high ;
And the transient hush was broken soon,
By an infant's feeble cry.

And many a favouring glance was sent
From the far celestial spheres ;
For the Lord of the Church is aye attent
On her Sacraments and Prayers ;

And His serving Angels ever watch,
With a deep and pure delight,
When an infant's brow is bared to catch
The dew of that holy Rite.

Great prayers, when the Curate came, were said,
And a cheering tale was told,
How children young to the Lord were led,
And his favour gained, of old.

And the sponsors vowed a solemn vow
(The wicked one's rule defied),
To worship the Christian's God, and bow
To none other Lord beside ;

Then gave their child to the quickening Rite,
And beheld with lowly dread,
As the sacred dew fell soft and light
On the little alien's head.

O doubt ye not of the grace conferred,
Nor question the marvel wrought :
O honour the power of Form and Word,
By a risen Saviour taught.

Feeble and common its wave may seem,
And narrow and mean its track ;
Yet virtue abides in Jewry's stream,
Which Syrian rivers lack.*

Viewless it sank to the heart within ;
And the priest of the Life Divine
Made on the brow of that child of sin
The Redeemer's warrior-sign.

Then was a rush in the summer sky,
On the holy ground a breeze,
A gentle wind in the branches high
Of the venerable trees.†

It swept through the Church, and softly shook
A window and open door ;
Raising a leaf in the Curate's book,
And turning it gently o'er.

And near to the christened child, behold,
A ministering Angel stood ;
Drawn by that sign on his forehead bold,
Of the all-alluring Rood ;

* 2 Kings v.

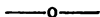
† 2 Sam. v. 24.

Drawn from his mates in the shining throng,
Who dwell by the crystal sea,
That little one's guard where foes are strong,
And his faithful guide, to be.

O ye that are trusted and honoured most
With the charge of God's own heir,
Beware lest his hallowed soul be lost,
For lack of *your* earnest care ;

For all unseen by day and by night,
In the chamber small and lone,
That Angel is noting each help or slight
To Christ's young follower done.

THE OLD MAN'S REVERIE.



Now are they past away,
The burning hours of strife,
And softly sinks his Autumn day,
His eventide of life ;
Like the slow cadence of a song,
That swept in changeful notes along.

Yet all their store appears,
And all his devious track,
As on the snow-clad hill of years
He turns and gazes back ;
Rejudging thence, in long array,
His mingled haps of grave and gay.

Revived before him there,
Flit things that long have past ;
Young joys that withered in the air,
And " hopes too bright to last " ;
Glad voices, that grew faint and cried ;
Gay faces, that grew pale and died.

The dark and sudden storm,
That bowed his head so low ;—
The shrivelling blight, that helped to form
That furrow in his brow ;—
He fronts them singly o'er again,
And freshly yields him to their pain.

Full oft some gamesome rout
Is blithely roistering nigh ;
But ere the laughter leaps without,
It dwindles to a sigh ;
And all the stillness seems increased.
As when a bell hath tolled and ceased.

Deal gently. Soon that line
Upon his fenceless brow,
The tangled shade and light divine
That loads his spirit now,
And the sad thought his eye hath shewn,
Shall be transcribed upon thine own.

INCIDENT OF THE MODERN PASCHAL
CEREMONIES.



- “ O most Merciful, grant us to see
“ Thine everlasting Sabbath, long foretold.
“ O most Merciful, vouchsafe that we
“ Messiah’s glorious kingdom may behold.
“ O most Merciful, make speed to be
“ The Consolation of Thy sorrowing Fold.”

So prays the Jew in many a Gentile nation,
Bowed down with sadness and a long unrest,
And fills the sacred cup, in expectation
Of wishful Israel’s long-delaying guest.

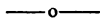
A door is opened, while the keen eye glistens,
And the bent ear, with transient hope inspired,
Still for that foot-fall on his threshold listens,
The foot-fall of Elijah, long-desired.

Alas, he hears but dreary winds, bemoaning
The human ills that lie along their path ;
Hears but the whole opprest creation groaning
For full redemption from the Eternal's wrath ;

Hears generations, ages, empires, speeding
With solemn tramp to the wide vale of death ;
Times, generations, empires new, succeeding,
Like showerless clouds high o'er the desert heath.

O Christian Souls, which have the enlightening
Spirit,
As every Paschal tide he prays again—
“ Most Merciful, may we that day inherit ”—
Awake to aid him all your strong “ Amen.”

THE PENITENT PRODIGAL.



BENEATH my Father's ample roof
Content and peace abide ;
And want and hunger stand aloof
From his dominion wide.

He, ever gentle, fondly cares
For all that round him move ;
And many a hired servant shares
The fulness of his love.

His ox and ass have each a shed
His sheep around him press ;
The camel and the hound are fed,
And know his kind caress.

And in my childhood I might lean
Upon his tender breast ;
And his bright eye and smile serene
Would softly on me rest.

But, blind with pride, I made a wreck
Of all my peace, and broke,
With rude rash hand, from off my neck,
His kind and easy yoke.

Ignoble toil is now my lot,
In an unhallowed land :
The days are long, the suns are hot,
And stern my lord's command.

My head with hungering is faint ;
My heart, with hope deferred ;
While none regard my low complaint,
Or speak one pitying word.

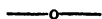
I will arise, and seek again
My Father's hallowed walls,
And soothly say what bitter pain
Upon his wanderer falls ;

And gladly will I run to keep
His kind commanding word,
If he will let me tend his sheep,
Or feed his meanest herd.

I must have caused him much unrest,
And many a cruel smart :
But then he hath a gentle breast,
And a forgiving heart ;

And if I bow my knee, and bare
My head, and worship low,
He cannot spurn the mourner's prayer.
I will arise and go.

THE HERALD ANGEL.



NIGHT had closed on David's city.
Constant in their order still,
Moon and stars were shining brightly,
O'er each fair Judean hill.
And, where erst the flocks of Jesse
With his shepherd-son were found,
Slept a flock ; and Jewish shepherds
Kept their faithful watch around.

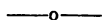
Then an Angel came, with glory,
Gleaming from the starry sky ;
Speeding swiftly near and nearer ;
Casting fear on every eye.
But full soon (his awed beholders
Strengthening for the light Divine)
Spake he words of kind assurance,—
“ Tidings of great joy are mine.”

Spake he words of ghostly comfort :—

- “ Children, outcast from your home,
- “ Fear ye not; for, lo, I bring you
- “ Tidings of a Saviour come.
- “ Sin and Satan long have prospered,
- “ Masters of the ruthless grave :
- “ Christ the Lord descends from Heaven,
- “ Them to smite, and you to save.”

Work and watch we as the shepherds,
Blameless, through this night of years ;
That when, heralding the judgment,
God's dread Angel re-appears,
And the glory shines, and palsies
With its beam our shrinking sight,
On our ears may fall the “ Fear not ! ”
Of that holy Christmas Night.

GOOD-BYE.



GOOD-BYE !—we meet again :
And grace be with us all,
Whatever joy or pain
Shall, ere we meet, befall.
A little while alone
Each pilgrim heart must beat :
Our paths are all unknown,
Yet in the end shall meet.

The severed turfs are cast
On either side the grave :
The good ship, sailing fast,
Divides the foaming wave.
The grave is closed, and light
The vessel hastens on :
Again the turfs unite,
The waves together run.

So fading years descend
To cold sepulchral dews :
Its course, until the end,
The bark of Time pursues.
And soul with soul careers,
As in its early prime,
Above the grave of years,
Behind the bark of Time.

Good-bye a little while :
If grace but guide our feet,
Though fortune frown or smile,
We yet again shall meet.
The drought of Death may fall
Upon each bubbling vein ;
But grace be with us all,
And we shall meet again.

WATCH FOR SPRING !



WATCH for Spring ! the days are lengthening ;
Cloud and tempest have withdrawn ;
And a sainted shade of Beauty
Flits along the spreading lawn.

Watch : and if you can discover
Where the merry maiden dwells,
When the August heats are raging,
When the wintry torrent swells :

Whether on yon mountain summit,
Up above the tranquil sky ;
Or within yon ancient forest,
Far withdrawn from prying eye ;

Or, as is my own opinion,
Down below yon laughing mere,
In some fair enchanted garden,
Where the birds sing all the year :

If, where'er she hides, you find her
Stealing forth upon her way,
And secure her foremost leaflet,
You shall be the Queen of May.

EDEN.

“ And a river went out of Eden to water the garden ; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.”

O I know the hallowed spot,
Where the Light of Light is poured ;
And the dusky world hath not
Such a garden of the Lord.
For all pleasant things are there,
And they bloom and bear apart,
In the Eden, fresh and fair,
Of the truly christened heart.

O I know the joyous stream,
With its wave of mystic might,
That is quickened by the beam
Of the living Light of Light.
And the beauty and the glow
Of the sunny world above,
They are imaged in the flow
Of that holy tide of love.

And with comfort for the sad,
And with ever-during grace
(Having made the garden glad,
And the heart a pleasant place),
By the foot that speeds along,—
By the fond and gentle eye,—
By the dear and thoughtful tongue,
Never soiled with harsh reply,—

By the kind and ready hand,
That, with skill to please inspired,
Has each art at its command,
And is never never tired,—
By these gates and channels four,
O it issues forth abroad,
And its gladdening waters pour
Into all the world of God.

THE TRUCE FOR BURIAL, BEFORE
SEBASTOPOL.

— o —

Now rest thee a moment,
 Red scourge of the isle :
Thou ravening cannon,
 Be silent awhile.
See deep in the trenches,
 And thick on the plain,
Your far-fallen harvest,
 The hillocks of slain.

O dare not to move ye,
 And breathe not a breath,
Where thousands are sleeping
 That first sleep of death ;
But hush to the spell
 Of the blood ye have shed,
And cease from the living
 In awe of the dead.

The white flag is waving :
 The shock and the crash,
The gun with its thunder,
 The sword with its flash,—
The war with its tumult,
 Disdained in their ears,—
Is charmed into stillness
 By stillness of theirs.

Then bring ye the stretcher,
 Ye brethren in might,
And let them be buried,
 With Office and Rite :
O bring ye the stretcher
 For comrade and kin,
And take them between you,
 And carry them in.

Ah ! pity to see them
 So low in the mould !—
So mangled and gory !—
 So voiceless and cold !—
Yet haste, ere the battle
 Revive, and the din,
And take them between you,
 And carry them in.

Go, soul of the lightning !—
 And when thou shalt glance
 By homesteads of England,
 And vineyards of France,
 Bid forth into heaven,
 And far o'er the wave,
 The wail of the widow,
 The dirge of the brave.

Go, ask for that widow
 Her portion of bread,
 And claim for the orphan
 The dues of the dead ;
 And say they are coming,
 Ah ! never again,
 To banks of the Severn,
 Or banks of the Seine.

THE CURFEW.

“ Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.”

— o —

MAKE haste and cover the fire, brother,—

Cover the fire of hate.

Though foes had been alert to-day,

And thou hadst been sorely hurt to-day,

Hurt not thyself by treasured spite :

He sins who feeds his wrath till night,

And the Judge is at the gate.

And since the morning's prime, brother,

Whatever flame unblest—

Whatever wild desire within

Has burned like ramping fire within—

Make haste and tame its evil glow,

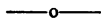
Or quench its smouldering embers now,

And trim thee for thy rest.

For life is flickering down, brother ;
And when *its* Curfew rings,
No matter what thy lot has been,
If free from lasting spot has been
Thy daily course upon the earth.
For peace to all vain care and mirth
Alike that knelling brings.

A U T U M N :

ON A CLEAR DAY.



"AH ! what will old age be like ?" I said.—
 For the gauds of summer had newly fled :
 The morning was crisp, and the evening chill :
 The meadow was bare, and the woodland still :
 The spirit of beauty had stolen away,
 And an angel of sadness encamped on the brae.

Meseemed that the youth of my heart was gone,
 And the light which had once on my fancy shone.
 Invisible tethers, and fingers of might,
 Seemed leading me ever, by day and by night,
 Still onward and onward, to regions of dread :
 And " what will old age be like ? " I said.

Then he whom I questioned replied, with a sign
To gaze on the earth's far boundary line,—

“ O what if the folds of their shrouding haze

“ Depart with the fervours of sunnier days,

“ Till the Lasting Hills shew clear and true

“ As Malvern now in his Autumn blue,—

“ Till the cool pure air of a chastened sky

“ Each bolt withdraws for the straining eye,

“ And the turrets of Heaven o'er plain and height

“ So forward press to the seeking sight,

“ That the succoured soul, through its aids of sense,

“ Shall well-nigh even with Faith dispense?

“ But list! shall I tell thee (what boots thee more)

“ How manhood may shew when its vigour is
o'er?—

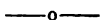
“ As a June of toil from the Autumn calm;

“ Its temperance honoured with crown and palm:—

“ As a day with ' the Days of Heaven ' entwined,

“ And but for a *fleeting* Fall resigned.”

THE HOLLY AND ITS COLOURS.



I SAW a grand old Holly-Tree
In yester-evening's walk,
With dark green leaves, and berries red,
That clustered round its stalk.

"O radiant Holly-Tree," I said,
"It fills me with delight,
"Amid November's gloom to find
"A form so bravely dight.

"Whatever tints a man should bring,
"And howsoever blend them,
"Thy green and red are so bespread,
"His skill could never mend them."

“ Yes, we are passing fair to view,”
The cheerful Tree replied :
“ My goodly green is goodliest seen,
“ With scarlet by its side.

“ For these in gifts are least alike.
“ My ruddy fruit receives
“ That portion of disparted light,
“ Which enters not my leaves ;

“ While every old fantastic leaf,
“ And every tender shoot,
“ Receives that other moiety,
“ Which enters not my fruit.

“ For each fair beam of glistering light
“ All earthly colour thralls,
“ And growths assume this hue or that,
“ As parts it where it falls.

“ If one should cleave that glistering ray,
“ And all its green unwind,
“ A glowing red, like furnace bed,
“ Would wake its fires behind ;

“ Or if one rather gleaned thereout
“ Each several rosy splint,
“ A joyous green, like summer screen,
“ Behind would rear its tint ;

“ While if one blended reds and greens,
“ Of measured tone and might,
“ The whiteness soon would there be shewn
“ Of Summer’s perfect light.

“ Thus all, that yon rich sun can give,
“ My favoured boughs contain ;
“ But one part here and one part there,
“ As shew my colours twain.

“ Each lacks just that the other has,
“ And has what’s there denied ;
“ And therefore they are beautiful,
“ Thus stationed side by side.”

“ O courteous Holly-Tree,” said I,
“ It fills me with delight,
“ To know the beauteous mystery
“ Of thy two colours bright.”

“ Then list yet more, and hear me say
(Pursued the fluent Tree),
“ What most I have delighted in,
“ Amid your Christmas glee.

“ My joy has been to hear you sing,
“ To see you kneel and pray,
“ And still to watch the merriment
“ Of your good Christmas-Day ;

“ And nothing have I fairer seen,
“ In Church or Mansion wide,
“ Than Rich and Poor on one bright floor
“ All stationed side by side.

“ For all your countless men and dames,
“ Upon one stem they grow ;
“ Your world-wide race is but one tree,
“ Where two main colours shew.

“ Your rich men are the leaves so green,
“ All armed their foes to meet :
“ Your poor folks are the berries red,
“ That cluster round their feet.

“ In pains and sorrows manifold
“ Have these been deeply dyed :
“ While those the fiercer heats are spared,
“ And fenced, whate’er betide.

“ So those, out-reaching here and there,
“ Their shelter fair must give ;
“ While these, so thickly set below,
“ In duteous order live.

“ For here God seeks the ruby, Faith,
“ And there the emerald, Hope,
“ And ever-blooming Charity,
“ That knows with death to cope.

“ Each lacks just that the other has,
“ And has what’s there denied ;
“ And therefore beautiful they are,
“ All stationed side by side.”

A man may guess, and I confess,
It filled me with surprise,
In that untrimmed and crooked hedge
To hear a Tree so wise.

Long while I sought for meet reply,
Yet only found to say,—
“ God make me always think of this
“ On his good Christmas-Day,

“ And give to thee, dear Holly-Tree,
“ The sight that glads thee most,
“ And shield thee, for thy charity,
“ In winter’s killing frost.”

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CHAPEL OF THE
NINE ALTARS, AT DURHAM :

NOW USED AS A MORNING CHAPEL FOR THE UNIVERSITY.

Written on hearing of the deaths of two College Friends.

FROM the Chair of old Van Mildert,
Where he sits in hallowed stone,
At the feet of blessed Cuthbert,
Meditating thoughts unknown,

Many a tide of life, receding,
With its freight of pious lore,
Into strange and distant waters,
Flows to Dunelm never more.

I remember forms that once were
(Were, and are not—) bending there ;
Pausing, on their way to Lecture ;
Kneeling down in solemn prayer.

One was sickly, pale, and feeble ;
One was strong, and loud of mirth ;
Both were full of schemes and wishes ;
Both have faded from the earth.

Daily—hourly—late and early—
Night and noon we used to meet ;
Now their names are in the marble,
And their mourners in the street.

I remember all their longings,
Doubts, convictions deep and sure :
All their fears about *collections*,
All their hopes about a *cure* :

How they spent their days and evenings ;
Where they walked, and when they read ;
Whom they prized, of living Doctors ;
Whom they revered, of the Dead :

What they trowed of warring Schisms,
And the Future's teeming well ;
How they loved the winding river ;
How they answered Chapel bell.

And if I were but in Dunelm,
When the blinding sun had set,
I believe that I could shew you
Traces of them lingering yet :

In the cloister's shadowy distance,
See the fluttering of their hoods ;
Hear their voices in Cathedral ;
Find their foot-print in the woods.

I remember others—others—,
Scattered thinly, far and wide ;
Parting from me,—from me,—from me ;
Parting, with the downward tide :

Parting, into lonely hamlets,—
Into cities dense and drear,—
Fever wards, and Pagan islands,—
Battle-ships, and tents of fear :

Parting—cheerful, calm, contented—
Each to some accepted strife ;
Where he offereth—slowly, slowly—
All his dedicated life.

It may be that, for one moment,
Issuing from his sacred aisle,
Some belovèd foster-brother
Turns and talks with me awhile.

Yet anon comes earnest duty,—
Comes and claims him from my sight ;
Points him to a failing censer ;
Shews an altar's flickering light :

And I mark him disappearing
—Calmly, quickly—up the quire :
Inly feeling how *they* * call him,
Underneath the holy fire.

Others, others, whom I know not,
(—God be gracious to them !—) now
Throng the Chair of old Van Mildert,
With their ceaseless ebb and flow.

Comes the tide in every morning ;
Hopeful hearts and joyous feet,
Willing minds and faithful spirits,
Mantling round the Prelate's seat.

Others, others, whom *they* know not,
Soon shall reach the northern door,
Pace the nave and cross the transept,
Where *their* foot comes never more :

They beholding, toiling, paling,
In some vineyard, lone and far ;
And, with us, retiring softly,
Where our predecessors are.

Many a tonsured priest and student,
Of Saint Cuthbert's honoured line,
Princely bishop, monk and prior,
Once before those Altars Nine,

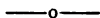
* Rev. vi. 9.

Now within the Eternal Gateway,
Resting him from labour done,
Turns and listens for the foot-fall
Of Saint Cuthbert's latest son.

Christ have mercy, and sustain us,
In the trumpet's quickening blast ;
Till the Elect are all in-gathered :
Till the Judgment-fires are past.

1855.

L I L L A .



Good Christian Man, who lov'st to see
 Young children round thee cling,
 I pray thee tell thy boys from me
 How Lilla served his king.—

King Edwin reigned from Humber's flood
 To Forth's far northern tide;
 And Lilla was a soldier good,
 Who fought on Edwin's side.

And Edwin plied all thought and strength
 Ill deeds to purge away,
 And reigned and prospered; till at length,
 Beneath his upright sway,

The robber and barbarian bold
 So curbed their lawless hand,
 A maid might bear a purse of gold
 Unhurt through all the land.

But he who ruled the Wessex horde
Was Edwin's ruthless foe ;
And one who served that Wessex lord
With deeds of wrong and woe,

Well trained in vice, beneath his cloak
The assassin's dagger hung,
And came to Edwin's gate, and spoke
With false beguiling tongue,

And feigned that he some message bore
From Wessex, from his chief,
And craved an entrance at the door,
Nor was refused belief.

Then on with licensed foot he strode,
King Edwin's face to see ;
And, ere or king or soldier trowed
So foul a fraud could be,

The accursed blade had gleamed on high
Amid their peaceful ring,
And, fleet as summer lightnings fly,
Was fastening on their king.

time to seek the resting sword—
To check the falling blow—
ween the assassin and their lord
The accustomed shield to throw.

Time only —barely time—for him
Who filled the foremost place,
With his great heart and willing limb
The falling blow to face.

O life is dear!—but rarely well
His part the soldier knew;
And when the impetuous weapon fell,
It pierced my Lilla through.

For he, while yet it gleamed above,
Athwart its course had prest;
Its fury quenching in the love
Of his unshrinking breast.

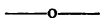
So Edwin lived, and Lilla died.
Yet lives my Lilla's name,
Inscribed for aye his king's beside,
In the bright scroll of Fame:

Inscribed amid the great and good,
The sons of love and truth,
Whose annals long shall stir the blood
Of our sweet English youth.

And thus, Good Christian Man, to thee
The deathless tale I bring,
And pray thee tell thy boys from me
How Lilla served his king.

S W I M M I N G.

A FRAGMENT.



* * * * *

O JOY of joys to boyhood dear,
 The wavelet's passing crash to hear,
 As headlong down through mirrored skies
 With fearless plunge the stripling hies !
 O joy of joys, when o'er the wave
 He lifts his forehead bright and brave,
 And shakes his flowing locks that drip,
 The fair flood rippling round his lip !
 With lordly arm and pliant limb,
 What is the foaming wave to him,
 But courser true with joy perturbed,
 All silver-shod and silver-curbed,
 Or magic gate that opens wide
 With but the touch of thought applied,
 Or fairy couch that proffers rest
 As gentle as a mother's breast ?
 Free as an eagle in the cloud,
 Where dwells the lightning fierce and loud,

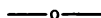
Forth on his arrowy path he speeds,
And all the cosmos gaily reads ;
Perusing now with closest eye
The billowy world that wanders by,
And now, as downward far he sweeps,
The marvels of the shadowy deeps,
And now, with fronting face, supine,
The mighty heavens that o'er him shine,
And now, propelled on side and hand,
The lasting hills that gird the strand,
And now, fair-glimmering through the flood,
The voiceful shape of comrade good ;
More dear to him, more near allied,
Than aught in all the worlds beside.
And yet mock wrath affection veils,
And mimic war that form assails ;
And plashing handfuls come and go,
With laughter's noisy overflow.
Then all his might each swimmer proves,
To learn (for sure) who fleetest moves,—
Who farthest fares, nor halts for breath,—
Who longest hides the flood beneath.
And then, with tamed and sobered pace,
They near again their starting-place,
And staggering low its heights regain,
With spoils of health in every vein.

So, plunging from the Firm above,
Their strength in alien depths to prove,
All meekly bared for toil and strife,
Come human souls to fleshly life.

So, on its ruby wave upborne,
The spirit laughs in life's young morn,
And joyous greets the billowy war,
With mystic lordship brought from far ;
While all material nature pours
Her loveliness, her costly stores,
Her harmonies of sight and sound,
Above, below, beside, around.
Nor shews there aught in all that whole,
Which more attracts than kindred soul ;
Like essence owning—like descent—
Like memories of some element,
Which somehow, on some nameless height,
Had somehow better borne its weight ;
Like warfare waging, unsubdued,
Sustained on self-same ruby flood.
Nor, to the watchers on the shore,
Appear perchance its wranglings more
Than boyhood's charge on sportive mate,
With latent love behind the hate.
And when its thousand fights are done,
Its hour of earthly sojourn gone,
With inward spoils of might and lore
It nears again the eternal shore,
And, taught and nerved by peril past,
But empty-handed, lands at last.

* * * * *

TO THE STREAM, WHICH RUNS AND SINKS
UNDER-GROUND, BY THE VESTRY DOOR
AT HAGLEY.



LITTLE rill, I will teach thee words,
Wherein thy tale to pour ;
And say thou them to the chorister boy,
As he trips on his morn and eve employ,
Thy burrowing waters o'er.

For at times, when a summer shower
Hath fed thy slender flood,
I have seen thee speaking to him as he past :
But the phrase in a river tongue was cast,
And he may not have understood.

Say then, when his musing heart
Its charm-won audience pays,
That all which he sees is passing away—
At vespers, at matins, by night, by day—
From the ken of his keenest gaze.

And say that, in loftier tracks,
 He too is journeying on :—
From boyhood to manhood, and thence to the path
(Veiled as the channel thy wavelet hath)
 Of his fathers who lived and are gone.

Yet bid him be blithe with thee,
 And drink his share of the light :
For a solace there is, man's heart to glad,
And I cannot endure a whining lad,
 Who sulks in a world so bright.

Yea, teach him to mind with thee,
 His task in sheen or shade ;
His hymn and his answer, his copy and sum,
And the duties of downward life as they come :—
 And none shall make him afraid.

For hark to the still small cry,
 Which o'er thee, day by day,
From the wall of the stirless Church is cried !—
“ Our God and His Service abide—abide—
 Though worlds are passing away.”

I. A. D.

CALLED, 16TH SEPT. 1866.

—o—

ISABEL is gone,
 Both from eye and ear :
 Gone from every known retreat—
 Garden-path and parlour-seat—
 Table-side, piano sweet,
 Hearth, and village dear.

Like a morning dream,
 Gone from touch and sight :
 Like an echo lost afar :
 Like the flowers in May that are :
 Like a soft and gentle star,
 Fleeing through the night.

Gone where many watch,
 Gathered there before :
 Where the sister-spirits dwell,
 Valued and remembered well,
 And the heavy parting knell
 Riseth never more.

CHURCHYARD MINISTRIES.



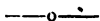
STORES, which heaven doth warden,
Where the dead repose
Fall, as on the garden
Where the living goes.
There the swallow's twitter
Comes at early dawn,
And the dew-drop's glitter,
As upon the lawn.

There the golden June-light
Sheds a fervid ray,
And the tender moon-light
Takes at eve its way.
Planets from afar shine
On each hillock there,
And the mighty star-shine
Thither knows to fare.

O good people, duly
 As the months go by,
Seek your dead, and newly
 'Tend them where they lie.
Some fair token bring them
 From old garden-groves :
Some sweet lyric sing them,
 Waking olden loves.

MEMORY AND SIGHT :

AT WHITSUNTIDE.

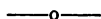


FAR away in former years,
 Very far away,
 Seen but of the heart, appears,
 Drest for Whitsun-Day—
 All her frock of stainless white,
 Gemmed and trimmed with fairy light—
 O, a vision blithe and bright
 As the meads of May.

Far within me now is borne,
 Very far within,
 Mid the light of Whitsun-Morn
 And the children's din—
 From beneath a hawthorn tall,
 Sadly pictured on my wall—
 White and mute and stirless—all
 Living eye may win.

1867.

VEILED MOURNING.



SWEET SUN, they say whose eyes are keen,
Whose hands the glassy tube have plied,
That far within thy dazzling sheen
Deep-anchored shades and glooms abide.

Alas, what cruel storm hath rained
So huge a darkness into thee ?
What giant-loss so rudely drained
The springs of all thy gaiety ?

Was there a sister-orb one while,
Who trod with thee the varied sky,
And cheered thee with her patient smile,
And then withdrew from ear and eye ?

Have children failed from all thy path—
Young planets ;—missed where morning glows,
And missed where noon its brightness hath,
And missed where eve its purple shews ?

Or hast thou lost a nearer yet,
And daily called her loud and long,
While fancy sketched her, brightly set,
The old familiar haunts among ?

I know not whose the darkening death,
Yet see thee seen from pole to pole,
About thy brow that glistening wreath,
These saddening crapes about thy soul.

Ah, well-a-day—for thee—for us !
Behold thou seest but mates in woe ;
For through thy system, glistening thus,
Doth unsuspected anguish go.

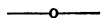
To every soul befalls a smart,
And voids to every gaze accrue :
There is not here so blithe a heart,
But hath its caverned shadows too.

Then teach thou me, O suffering sun,
With thee a cheerful face to make,—
Unscared my daily course to run,
And where I may a smile to wake.

For surely those who most do mourn
Like thee should know to comfort most :
Yea rather, like that Man Forlorn,
Who soothes and comforts all the lost.

1867.

S P R I N G.

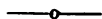


I HAD not loved thee, sunny Spring !
Thy face was fair to view,
And thou didst make the coppice ring,
With music pure and true.
But on my mind thy fragrant wind
A boding sadness laid :
I knew thy day must soon decay,
And all thy beauty fade.

And I did hate thee, sunny Spring !
For in thy withering gale,
Soiled by the dark destroyer's wing,
I saw a loved one fail.
I saw her borne, one April morn,
Beneath the hawthorn tree ;
And thou the while didst gaily smile,
As though 'twere fine to see.

Yet now I greet thee, sunny Spring !
I greet the cheering lore
Thy daisied lanes and meadows bring,
Thy laughing cuckoos pour.
As primrose ranks re-gild the banks,
Which desert long had lain,
All I have lost by earthly frost
Shall blossom forth again.

THE LIGHTS ASHORE.



I SAILED the deep sea-water :
The moon was shadowed o'er :
A sombre cloud had caught her :
But I saw the lights ashore.
And I knew that soon or later
I should gain the friendly pier,
The hearth, whose cheer was greater,
And things familiar there.

'Mid life's dark billows sailing,
Around me closed the night,
With tones of earthly wailing ;
But afar I saw the light.
And I knew that late or early,
I should gain a joy-lit shore,
Where those I loved so dearly
Would greet me as of yore.

H Y M N :

FOR THOSE WHO GET THEIR LIVING BY HAND-LABOUR.

“ Lord, Thou wilt ordain peace for us : for Thou also hast
wrought all our works in us.”

JESU, of the sons of toil
Sovereign Leader, hearken now :
Us from all our guilt assoil,
And with Thy good gifts endow.

When the banded smiths of old,
Decked with beauty, fair to see,
Altar-place and ark of gold,
All their wisdom was from Thee.

When to Jewry's tiring height
Gaza's fence the hero bare,
Thine was all the mystic might,
All the lordly courage there.

When the ploughman ploughed till eve,
Where victorious Kishon flows,
Taught the flowery plain to cleave,
All his art from Thee arose.

And when Thou wast here below,
Rudely housed with needy kin,
Forth at morn 'twas thine to go,
All the daily meal to win.

Lord and Leader ! Nazarene !
Grant us knowledge, force, and skill,
Cheer of heart, whate'er the scene,
And the stout enduring will.

Toiling now where thou hast toiled,
Help us, Lord ! and, when we die,
Us, from all our guilt assoiled,
Gather to Thy home on high.

Exod. xxxi. 1—11. Judges xiii. 24, 25 : xiv. 5, 6, 19 : xv. 14 :
xvi. 2, 3. Isaiah xxviii. 24—26. S. Mark vi. 3.



In Memoriam

M. D.

CALLED, 31ST MARCH, 1865.



I sometimes hold it half a sin
To put in words the grief I feel
For words, like nature, half reveal
And half conceal the soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
A use in measured language lies ;
The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

TENNYSON.

I.

I CANNOT think that thou art gone,
Yet dare not hope to greet thee more;
Thy loss I rue with ceaseless moan,
Yet ceaseless on thine image pore.

One half my sad self-battling heart
Will have it that, in sables hid,
It saw a coffin slowly part,
With thy dear name upon the lid;

And that it felt the handful fall,
And heard the sorrowing mourners weep,
And watched the hawthorn's shadow tall
By moonlight o'er thy pillow creep.

Another half, more firmly set
To disbelieve what grief it may,
Will have it that it sees thee yet,
Low-seated where thy children play;

Thy Charlie with his knightly mien,
Thy Rosie with her maiden wile,
Thy Willie with his brow serene,
Exulting in their mother's smile.

In turn that dismal knelling strain,
In turn this vision pure and bright,
Is pressed upon my stormy brain,
And maddens me or pours delight.

I know not which of them to store,
Or which will be dispelled anon :
I dare not hope to greet thee more,
Yet cannot, cannot, think thee gone.

April, 1865.

II.

ONE bosom nursed us. On one shadowy hearth,
Shadowed too early by a mother's death,
We learned to walk, and said our earliest prayers,
And held our childish revels. She and I
Were there alone, and drew one common breath.

In time we sallied, holding hand in hand,
Adown one garden-walk ; between rich beds
Of polyanthos and auricula.
Together did we build beside the well
Full many a wondrous moss-house ; spangled o'er
With cockle-shells and daisies, and in front
Made gay with pavement of the whitest pebbles.
On one bench, before one mighty dame,
We coned our little lessons ; carrying help,
Either to other, in those painful straits
Which children know ; she righting all the frill,
Which punishable romp had discomposed,

And I suggesting how the stubborn sum
Might be compelled to yield its due result.
In holidays I, showing dauntless front,
Withstood the hissing gander in his wrath ;
While she, admiring much and pitying more,
Made pretty comment on his yellow brood.
Climbing the perilous ladder I at times
Dragged from his hole beneath the cow-house eaves,
For her meek eye, the curious leathern bat ;
And with much risk, as she would always say,
I borrowed for her nearer scrutiny
The younglings of the kennel. In the spring
Our prettiest flowers we in one posy tied :
In summer, shared our cherries. In the fall,
In many a vagrant ramble o'er the farm,
I fed her with the daintiest bramble-berry,
And, hanging on it, drew within her reach
The rustling hazel with its auburn fruit.
In wintry hours she played the little nurse,
And soothed my chilblains with a pitying hand ;
Bemoaning all the while, in sweetest words,
That men and boys should have such cruel need
To leave their fire, and face a driving snow.

Little by little our one path was split
In two diverging halves ; but more and more
Our hearts together grew. Known only to ourselves,
A thousand little sorrows and delights,
Together shared, and shared by none besides,
Our memories filled, and made the two lives one.

The constant post we pressed into our cause,
And to and fro our thoughts for ever ran.
I nothing knew but it was told to her,
And she knew nothing but 'twas told to me.

As years went by, one sought and gained her love ;
And on a sunny day, with tearful joy,
I spoke her marriage-blessing. Then there came,
Each other following, in succession due,
Four little babes to beautify her hearth ; *
And on that hearth I was a frequent guest,
Beholding all her fairy happiness.

And now men say, and look as if 'twere true,
That she is sleeping in the lone churchyard,
Withdrawn from all whose cheering day she made ;
And when I shake my head, and doubt their speech,
And 'gainst them urge that I am here alive,
Which could not be if she were sleeping there,
They tell me calmly that her brother's hand,
Which helped her deck the moss-house by the well,
And fed her with the daintiest bramble-berry,
And laid the marriage-blessing on her head,
Itself threw flowers into her early grave.

April, 1865.

* The fourth was born a few days before his mother's death.

III.

THE little silvery northern day,
When all its strength is o'er,
Puts on its suit of evening-grey,
And loiters on the shore ;

But the great golden day, that shines
On yonder central zone,
At once in all its might declines,
No eve or twilight known.

And, Mary, thine was golden light,
Though soft as healing dew :
With tropic cheer it filled our sight,
In tropic haste withdrew.

A sky bedimmed and growing chill
Thou tarriedst not to see,
Nor darkness creeping o'er the hill,
Nor mist upon the lea ;

For while thy light was at its best,
Thy world without a stain,
We turned and missed thee in the west,
And sought thee all in vain.

O it is hard to lose such light!—
From noon, so rich and clear,
To pass at once to ebon night!—
From song to silence drear!

Yet haply it had harder been
To see that light decay
In feeble fragmentary sheen,
As fades the northern day.

Who could have borne to see thy face
With peevish care assailed?—
Thy spirit, bright with gladsome grace,
In cramping shadows veiled?

O, as for me, I gladlier see,
Though lonely paths are mine,
Thy sun go down with glowing crown,
And no fore-tokening sign.

April, 1865.

IV.

WE had no thought of Death : for no man trowed
That more than half that precious life was gone.
And yet by some presagement sent to it,
Or by some vague fore-feeling of its own,
Her spirit in its deep seclusion heard
The approaching footstep of desired repose ;
And, writing freely to a cherished friend,
She said she looked for quietness and rest.

Many her joys had been, and deep and full
Her glad thanksgivings. Cloudless bridal moons,
With festive celebration cheered along,
Her skies had traversed ; and her cup had teemed
With the rich vintage of all earthly loves.
New friends had met her ever as she went,
And blest and welcomed her with both their hands ;
And on her cradling arm three little tongues,
Which never spake before since time began,
Each after each, like those who gently swell
The growing anthem in a minster quire,

Had broken silence with the cry of Mother.
Nor was the work, her meek hand found to do,
Esteemed an irksome burden. As the sun
Pursues his ordered path through every sky,
Aye coursing round creation's central orb,
And bears along his ponderous planet-train,
Of all its weight unconscious, so did she
Fulfil her daily round of woman's work,
Nor ever mark the pressure of its cares ;
And, like that sun amid his planet-train,
If any dark thing stepped into her path,
Or chose to whirl itself about her seat,
She poured upon it floods of summer sheen,
From the rich fountain of her own glad heart,
And saw it not but in the gracious light
Herself had given. Even when peril came,
And flung its gloomy shadows thick and deep
About the pillar of her household joys,
Though more anxiety was felt within
Than might be guessed from that so tranquil brow,
And from the calmness of that tutored heart,
Which never vexed another with its care,
Yet patient trust made sunshine round her still,
And saintly firmness bore her smiling through.
None better knew to relish life and love,
Nor spurn the little wholesome bitterness,
Considerately sent amid the good.

But rest and quietness are holy things,
And dearest unto those who holiest are ;

And when the stress of recent fear was o'er,
And brighter suns again were shining out,
Rest was the boon she craved ; while nigh at hand
Some faithful instinct felt that it was stored.
So writing freely to a cherished friend,
From both their girlhoods cherished and beloved,
She told her little tale of fears dispelled,
And anxious moments happily gone by,
And said with thankfulness, and in such words
As sounded like the cadence of a song,
That now she hoped to dwell a little while
In the sweet lull of mute unmoving peace.

Upon the octave of that day she died :
For so He giveth His beloved sleep.

O meek and quiet spirit ! not for thee
We shed the tear and heave the deep-drawn sigh,
But for our restless and unquiet selves,
Who linger yet in lonesome labours here.
Thou shalt not any more or grieve or fear
Or suffer weariness. He heard thy wish,
Who, when His Twelve had done a tiring work,
Withdrew them to a hill beyond the sea,
A desert mountain, high and lifted up,
And banquetted them there with mystic food.*
He heard, and whispered to thy listening heart

* St. Mark vi. 30—44.

His "Be it to thee even as thou wilt,"
And made thee prescient of some near repose,
Though witting little of its giant depths.
He heard, and called thee from this wearying world,
Whose very happiness exhausts and tires,
And led thee to His mountain o'er the sea ;
The crystal sea which is before His Throne,
Which skirts a mountain desert to the world
But to the godly rich in living fruits ;
That in the quietness which there abides,
And in the light of His approving Eye,
Amid refreshing sights and healing airs
And all the soothing tones of Paradise,
Thy gentle soul might have unbroken rest.

October, 1865.

V.

God's bidding angel sought her—
The mother and the wife,
The sister and the daughter—
To prove a goodlier life.

Her noon was hardly over ;
The night was far away :
The heavens were bright above her,
And duties round her lay :

But she had wrought so truly,
From morning's early prime,
That rest was offered duly,
Before the evening-time.

Sweet Paradise is hailing
An added robe of white,
While hearts are here bewailing
Their loved and vanished light ;

For sorely we have missed her,
In all her workfields here ;
The daughter and the sister,
The wife, the mother dear.

October, 1865.

VI.

* * * * *

He gave, Who took away. He took away,
Who in the greatness of his bounty gave.

I saw her last at Malvern ; when the year
Had spent its summer, and the leaves had paled,
And she was ruddy with the glow of health.
We climbed a breezy hill ; beholding thence
The many beauties of a fading world,
And marking far away, towards the north,
Some portions of that blue uneven wall,
Which skirts the border of our native shire.
Those Shropshire haunts, she said, she knew not
now,
When she could visit more ; and, parting there
She gave me at the foot of that fair hill
The living kiss which was her last to me.
I saw her not again until I came,
Late in the evening of this day of tears,
And found her, in the midst of weeping friends,

August as some great priestess, folded round
With all the matchless majesty of death ;
Unmoving, voiceless, deaf to voice of mine ;
Already vested for the funeral rites,
And mindful only of the Invisible.
And none shall see her more ; until at length,
When he too kneels for quietness and rest,
And sets his face towards the Undisclosed,
And wins his way through cleansing fire and flood,
'Tis given him to behold, with altered eye,
And by a purer and diviner light
Than flows from sun or moon or cosmic star,
The mighty mysteries of those hidden worlds
Where summers never fade nor lives decay.

October, 1865.

VII.

MARY! for thee my earliest verse was made :
Beneath thine eye, one long-left winter's night,
Its faltering lines were gathered and arrayed ;
And thou, Sweet Critic, wast thy poet's light.
I turn me now from every quiring height,
And seek no more in lyric strains to leap.
'Tis gone, whate'er was mine of minstrel might :
For drooping thought in dusky prose would creep ;
Would roam where none behold, and where none
hearken weep.

With thee the melody of life is flown :
Here by thy grave my minstrel-wand I break ;
And here, upon thy grave, its dying moan
The singing-voice within me wills to make.
And yet I would, for thy dear children's sake,
Who ne'er shall know thee as their elders knew,
I could have framed one lay, which should awake
Some image of thee, robed in faithful hue.
Vain hope ! till man may paint the lustrous morning
dew.

For as a radiant dew-drop wast thou here,
Attracted sunward from thine earliest birth ;
Thy spirit made but shapelier and more clear,
By what it knew of chill night-airs of earth.
The glittering sunbeam loved its spotless worth,
And dowried thee with splendours from on high ;
Then, while we doated on thee, bade thee forth,
And drew thee from us far within the sky,
And hid thee in God's light from sorrow's tearful
eye.

The gay laburnum's golden laugh was thine,
With all the willow's readiness to weep ;
As quickly moved by varying touch or sign,
As is the harp by hands that o'er it sweep ;
Or as the waves of some fair inland deep,
Which rise responsive, whencesoe'er the gale :
Yet, fixed the while as battered Castle-Keep,
Or stirless rock, which storms in vain assail,
Thy faith might never swerve, thy love might never
fail.

Alive to pain as is the shrinking dove,
Who hides her nest within the bowery tree,
And fears with all her soul both hawk above
And truant schoolboy prowling o'er the lea,—
Thine was the heart, Sweet Dove, which ne'er
might flee,
How terrible soe'er the impending doom,
If aught were perilled which was dear to thee ;

And thine the strength, in tempest and in gloom,
To bear, as peace is borne, with meek unruffled
plume.

The rose's queenliness, without its thorn
(Discovered late) to harass and dismay ;
The lily's purity, without its scorn
Of friendly aiding in life's upward way ;
The jacinth's sweetness, but without decay
When summer shines and suns are prospering
most ;
The gracious myrtle's alway-green array,
Without its frailness in December's frost ;
All this, and more, in thee have we thy mourners
lost.

All things of beauty carry thoughts of thee,
And mind me of thee wheresoe'er I rove ;
But most I find thee where 'tis mine to see
The fervid woodbine in its paths of love.
For ever seeking goodlier rest above,
How, like thyself, it twines round all it meets !
How, like thyself, it fears at all to move,
Unless at every turn its tendril greets
Some stay which it may clasp, and gladden with its
sweets !

So have I seen thee all true yearnings blend,
In one unwavering and beauteous course :

Thus ever clinging to thine earthly friend :
Thus ever rising to'ard thy being's Source :
While each upholder would have been the worse,
For being spared thy spirit's fragrant load.
Hail to thee now ! entwined with lasting force,
O Sweetest Woodbine, all thy journey trod,
About the pearly steps of the firm throne of God !

There shalt thou whisper loving prayers for us,
Whom on its heavenward flight thy spirit knew :
Whom yet, in spirit-ways mysterious,
It knows, and mantles round, and doth imbue
With spirit-perfume. Though concealed from
view,
Ne'er shall its mystic windings be undone
From off the human stays on which it grew.
It hath but mounted nearer to the Sun,
To gain maturer sweets for those whom it hath won.

Thine earthly relics, Dearest, we have stored
Where a tall thorn its forenoon shadow throws :
And oft I think how years ago we moored
Our mimic bark, at day's too rapid close,
In kindred shelter !—how that thorn which grows
Beside the granary steps, and flings its shade
O'er the small water where our pennons rose,
Could tell of harbour there each evening made,
And of two children small, who there for ever
played !

And o'er thine ashes we have spread the Sign
Of God's protection and of saving Might :
And mention make we, in the bordering line,
Of His unmoving Hand and sleepless Sight,
Who knows to banish all that may affright,
And all that desecrates to ward away :
Who in the deepest darkness maketh light,
And the fine essence of our mouldering clay
Preserves for His own Call, when dawns the Awaken-
ing Day.

And round thy pretty tombstone we have set,
As thou perchance hast fondly smiled to see,
Thy darling flower, thine own loved violet ;
The type of sainted goodness and of thee.
And loving fingers gather thence for me
At times some precious growth, with memory
fraught,
And send it to me wheresoe'er I be ;
For there at times thy little ones are brought,
And in meek deeds of love and gentle kindness taught.

There shall thy mourners often often come,
And commune with thee in sweet musings there ;
Thy hawthorn's consecrated shade the home
To which our fondest thoughts would oft repair,
If ever ours should be the doom to fare
O'er severing seas in countries far away,
Would it were mine, when all is o'er, to share
With thee the shelter of that hawthorn spray,
And there with thee to wait the Eternal Morning's ray!

What is to be we know not. What has been
Has been to us a blessing and a joy :
A pure bright blessing and a joy serene,
Which nothing now can tarnish or alloy.
When thwartings baffle, and grim cares annoy,
And earthly discord deafens with its din,
Our golden Past, which nought can e'er destroy,
Shall be to us a harvest gathered-in ;
Wherefrom the fainting soul fresh food may ever win.

And now we part not, Mary, though my heart
Abandons here its long-loved poet-strain :
We are not parting, nor shall ever part,
While chainless thought and being's self remain.
I shall not see thee on this earth again,
As I have seen thee in the days gone by ;
Listening I bend my famished ear in vain,
For tones which cheered it when thy voice was nigh ;
Yet spirit-wings are stout, and keen the spirit-eye.

Adieu to Minstrelsy ! but all my tongue
Would die and wither to its lowest root,
Ere parting word to thee were from it wrung.
Come to me often, and my soul recruit,
In holy dreams, and vesper musings mute :
That o'er and o'er again we two may flee
Through all the past, and mark its latest fruit,
And sigh or smile at finished grief and glee :
And fleet, when life is o'er, shall be my speed to thee.

March, 1866.



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